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INFLUENCE OF WAR UPON MISSIONS.

BY PROF. UPHAM, OF BOWDOIN COLLEGE.—*Abridged from the Manual of Peace.*

War is a great obstacle in the way of the missionary enterprise. The missionary announces to the heathen as one great element of the gospel, that it induces men to renounce strife and contention, to love each other, and to treat all mankind as brethren. But they at once exhibit their incredulity. They state to him that the people from whom he comes, and who have heard the disclosures of the gospel from their childhood, are continually in conflict; they themselves have heard the roar of their cannon; they have seen the flash of their swords; nay more, their own families have been assaulted; their own houses have been rifled; their own beloved children have been torn away and carried into captivity by men, who called themselves Christians. This is not a mere picture of the imagination. It is said, that the emperor of China gave as a reason for refusing the admittance of the Christian religion into his empire, that '*wherever Christians go, they whiten the soil with human bones.*' A Turk at Jerusalem once said to Wolff, the missionary, 'Why do you come to us?' The missionary replied, 'to bring you peace.' 'Peace!' replied the Turk, leading him to a window and pointing to Mount Calvary, 'there, upon the very spot where your Lord poured out his blood, the Mohammedan is obliged to interfere, to prevent Christians from shedding the blood of each other.'

We are sending missionaries to Syria and Palestine; but are the inhabitants of those countries ignorant, is it possible that they should be ignorant, of the selfish, rapacious, and violent character of nations reputedly Christian? When the missionary makes his appearance, and announces the gospel of peace, will not the Arab and the Mohammedan point to the ruins of Jaffa and St. Jean D'Acre; will they not point to their devastated fields, their burning houses, the bones of their slaughtered countrymen, and say, and with reason too, We have no confidence in your gospel.—We ask the Christian public to reflect upon these things, and to inquire seriously, whether they have any reason to expect, that while they hold the sword with one hand, the proffer of the gospel with the other will be attended with any adequate success? Have they any reason to believe, that God looks upon such a course with approbation?

But some will perhaps object, that such are solitary and exempt cases; and that a great portion of the heathen world

are not thus acquainted with the vices and crimes of Christians. We wish it were so, but it is not. The roar of Christian cannon and the flash of Christian musquetry, and the hyena outcry of the Christian military onset, have been heard and seen, wherever there are men. We are sending missionaries to our own heathen tribes and to Syria and Palestine, and also to India. Does India know nothing of the character of Christian nations, and of the hostility of that character to Christian principles? Have not the armies of England at different times and under different leaders, laid waste her fairest provinces, burnt her villages, and exemplified, to an extent deeply painful to every feeling heart, the tremendous crimes, which are capable of being found in association with the sacred but perverted names of civilization and Christianity? 'There is nothing,' says a celebrated English orator, speaking of one of the principal agents in the transactions of British India then on trial, 'to be found in the history of human turpitude; nothing in the nervous delineations and penetrating brevity of Tacitus; nothing in the luminous and luxuriant pages of Gibbon, or of any other historian, dead or living, who, searching into measures and characters with the rigor of truth, presents to our abhorrence depravity in its blackest shapes, which can equal, in the grossness of the guilt, or in the hardness of heart with which it was conducted, or in low and grovelling motives, the acts and character of the prisoner.'*—And such are the pioneers of the gospel; such are the men, who, in the lamentable ubiquity of human avarice and crime, have ever been destined to present to the hungering and thirsting nations of heathenism the antepast of the religion of purity and peace. And has this great evil been sufficiently contemplated and examined by the Christian church? We call it a *great* evil; not only because it is so in itself and in its own nature, but because it is great in its application; because it is found *every where*; pervading every island and every continent and every country and every name and tribe under heaven. It is a fatal mistake which some will be likely to commit, that, though the evil is aggravated in its nature, it is limited and curtailed in its application; and consequently of no great moment.

Fleeing from the abominations of America and India, we direct our attention to the immense regions of Africa. As the missionary passes along that benighted coast with his announcement of the glad tidings of salvation and peace, can it be supposed that the countless wrongs and contumelies, suffered

* Speech of Sheridan on the Impeachment of Warren Hastings.

for three centuries at the hands of Christian nations, will at once be forgotten? Undoubtedly the missionary will find in the recollection of these wrongs an obstacle of the most serious kind to his benevolent efforts. The untutored Africans will experience the greatest difficulty in satisfactorily solving the problem of the direct contradiction between alleged Christian principles and known Christian practice; and so long as this is the case, it cannot be expected that their hearts will be thrown fully and frankly open to the reception of divine truth. We give you the gospel, says the missionary; we come to you in peace; and we pray you to listen to us, and to become Christians. 'O,' says the bereaved and heart-broken mother, 'rather give me my sons and daughters, whom you Christians have torn shrieking from my arms, and have plunged into the ocean, or have enslaved in distant lands.'

And now what is to be done? Have we not by our misconduct erected a Chinese wall in the way of the progress of the gospel? Can we reasonably expect to purify the world without a purification of ourselves? Undoubtedly missions will be established and will be attended with some degree of success; but we draw our conclusion without looking closely and seriously enough at the premises, if we suppose, that the world will be converted, without our taking this great stumbling-block out of the way. Ships of war must be laid up; armies must be disbanded; the militia system must be given up; fortifications must be demolished; cannon must be melted into bells for churches; swords must be beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks; and then what light will beam from the brow of the missionary, as he stands the messenger of the *Prince of peace* on heathen soil! He will come not only with the gospel, but with a practical commentary on its principles, so full, so striking, so overwhelming, as to carry conviction at once to the heathen heart.

CLERICAL OBJECTIONS TO THE PEACE MOVEMENT.

1. *We deprecate excitement and strife. There is far too much of them already; they have made the community a sort of moral caldron, seething and boiling with passion; and we wish, if possible, to keep them from our churches and congregations.*

But do you dread all kinds of excitement? Would you deprecate and discourage the excitement of sinners turning in multitudes from the error of their ways; the excitement of Christians struggling for rapid growth in all the graces of the